

# THE MORNING NEWS

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## Three generations of Wilhelms are dedicated island visitors



With daughters Laraine and Trudi and granddaughter Kara

ORANJESTAD -- Rudy and Dorothy Wilhelm began visiting Aruba in 1972, long before timesharing had come to the island. Like many, they found the seclusion and informality of the Divi and Tamarijn Resorts in the Manchebo Beach area were just what they sought in their island escape, and have returned to the island 44 times

since then. "We have been coming here so long, the first place we stayed was the Sheraton...can you imagine?" asks Dorothy. Then, good friends of their recommended they try the "low rise" area with them, and their fantasy vacation destination got even better.

Their daughters Trudi, and Laraine, along with Laraine's

husband and daughter George and Kera, couldn't agree more. Since the family matriarch and patriarch purchased timesharing back in 1987, they have all vacationed her regularly. Kera, who is only ten -years -old, has already visited Aruba seven times, thoroughly enjoying this quality time with her grandparents.

The Wilhelms originally purchased 40 weeks at the Dutch Village, but soon used up their time. Now they own 4 weeks in January at Divi Village and two weeks in November, so they can accommodate their family whenever the young ones get off from school. "We just found it harder and harder to leave," observed Rudy, "so we kept buying more time. As you get older, it is great to escape those winters we have in Albany, New York, for as long as possible."

The Wilhelms have particular kudos for the "friendliest staff on Aruba," which they have found at the Divi resort and timeshare facility.

Continued on pg 2

## ATA among the top 3 Tourism Offices in the Netherlands!



See story on pg 2

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## Ban boots Iran out of Syria peace talks

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - UN leader Ban Ki-moon on Monday abruptly excluded Iran from this week's Syria peace conference after it refused to back calls for a transitional government to end the country's war.

Ban withdrew a surprise invitation to Iran less than 24 hours after it had been made, bidding to save the talks which start in the Swiss town of Montreux on Wednesday.

The UN secretary general was forced to act after the Syrian opposition threatened to withdraw from the talks if Iran takes part. The United States also demanded the invitation be withdrawn if Iran did not support a Syria declaration adopted by major world powers in Geneva in 2012.

Iran is a major backer of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who reaffirmed that he would not stand down in an interview with AFP published Monday.

The Geneva declaration had called for a transitional government to guide the country out of the three year

war which the United Nations says has left well over 100,000 dead.

The UN leader said Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif had repeatedly assured him that he "understood and supported" the aim of the peace conference to set up an interim government.

"The secretary general is deeply disappointed by Iranian public statements today that are not at all consistent with that stated commitment," said UN spokesman Martin Nesirky.

"He continues to urge Iran to join the global consensus behind the Geneva communique."

"Given that it has chosen to remain outside that basic understanding, he has decided that the one-day Montreux gathering will proceed without Iran's participation," Nesirky added.

Ban was "dismayed" by the storm growing around the peace conference, the most intense diplomatic bid yet to end the near three-year war.

Continued on pg 6





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## Aruba Tourism Authority Europe nominated for "Travel Bureau 2013" by Dutch Travel Award



ORANJESTAD -- Aruba Tourism Authority Europe is among the top 3 best travel bureaus in the Netherlands. ATA (Aruba Tourism Authority) recently received the very pleasant news that their main office in Europe, who is also represented in different European countries were nominated by Dutch Travel Award as the best travel bureau for 2013.

A travel bureau is known on Aruba as a tourism office, which is an office that represents and promotes our island in other countries.

In this category, there were two other nominees, namely, the Cyprus Travel Bureau and the winner of the prize, Spain. TravMagazine, a media company specialized in tourism are in charge of organizing this event. The winner was announced last

Tuesday in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

ATA is known to offer the very best service to travel agencies, tour operators and all those interested. Such a nomination attests to and confirms Aruba's professionalism and excellent work which has captured the attention and respect of international instances.

ATA is among the top 3 travel bureaus which numbers approximately 30 travel bureaus from different destinations established in the Netherlands. This is definitely a great honor and a reward for their efforts. Certainly, all their partners including the ATA Aruba have contributed to this prestigious recognition.

"ATA congratulates their colleagues in Europe under the leadership of the Area Di-

rector, Tirso Tromp. All colleagues in Aruba and other representatives of Aruba around the world send their congratulations for a job well done by ATA Europe," said C.E.O. of ATA Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes

## Three generations of Wilhelms... Continued from pg 1

"Over the years, we have formed such special relationships here. We are sad to see Gerrit Griffith move up to managing the Divi Phoenix.

Even though it is a great move for him, we miss his cheering countenance and daily greeting. Others, like Hubert, Miguel and Christie, still make our visits more than memorable."

"Before Aruba, we had traveled to other Caribbean destinations," recalls Dorothy, "Nassau, Dominican Republic and Antigua come to mind. Once we vacationed on Aruba, however, that was it for us. We felt no need to venture anywhere else in the region."

"Out of curiosity, we did a trip to Hawaii a few years ago," recalls Rudy. "I can understand its appeal for West Coasters, but we found it a very long, exhausting journey to and from upstate New York, and expensive."

"We had three overnight



**Rudy and Dorothy Wilhelm** layovers," cites Dorothy. "With you kids in tow, that is tiring for everyone, and it took us days to get our energy back, once we arrived home. It was expensive, and honestly, though pretty, we didn't find anything there that we don't have on our favorite island of Aruba."

For three generations of Wilhelms, Aruba is the place to be for a great winter getaway!



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## BNA welcomes guest lecturer in celebration of National Library Day



**Claudia Dold**

ORANJESTAD -- Though January 20th is better known as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, on Aruba, it is also National Library Day, coinciding with National Library Week in the U. S. Director of the Biblioteca Nacional Aruba, (BNA) Astrid Britten was proud to welcome guest speaker from the University of South Florida Libraries, Claudia Dold, who gave a very interesting presentation on incorporating videos into the library agenda, as a highlight of their celebratory events.

Ms. Dold has an impressive CV, with Masters Degrees in Library Arts and Information Science, Taxation, Business, and a Bachelors of Arts in French, from University of South Florida, Georgia State, Adelphi, and Colby College. She has given presentations on a diverse array of subjects at several important international and U.S. conferences as well having published papers on library literature and various health subjects. She is the recipient of a number of grants, and recently won an international video competition.

Ms. Dold began making and deploying videos for li-



**Librarians plan a video**

brary and university use at her institution since 2008, professing "my first video took me a month to complete. Now they take about a week." The subjects relate mostly to the use of the mechanics of users making the most of the school's library, including research techniques, becoming acquainted with its staff, and how to avoid plagiarism. She has been awarded a number of grants from the USF Innovative Teaching Opportunities program.

"The nature of libraries has changed," she told her audience of BNA staffers. "I think we have always thought of libraries as a place to store books, but in the 21st century, we need to look at a library as a bridge to our users. We reach out with the knowledge we have, so that we can reach our users, and connect the two of them. Our job has become much more pro-active in finding our audience and making the information we have at the library intelligible to them."

Her talk focused on not

only the advantages of using video to appeal to contemporary audiences, but also the nuts and bolts of envisioning, producing and editing a project. Ms. Dold expressed that video would be an ideal medium for Aruba's library to reach its multicultural audiences, by featuring narration in the four languages used on Aruba, as well as subtitles. Videos also allow the distribution of information more easily to the hearing and visually impaired, through the use of close captioning and the audio narration.

At the University of South Florida, the library also works closely with the professors. Videos of the particulars of a course and its requirements, what is expected of the students and how they will be graded, allow the professors to save classroom time explaining these details; they can simply refer the students to the videos as a homework assignment and required viewing. Ms. Dold will be giving her presentation again to Aruba's Minister of Educa-



**L to R: Claudia Dold with BNA Director Astrid Britten and Librarian Ronny Alders**

tion, Family Policy and Adult Education, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar later this week, before returning to Florida.

The bastion of books that is our libraries are very sensitive regarding the drastic changes in how being wrought by the Internet Information Age as to how we are now educated and informed. The management of BNA is well aware that as an institution, it can only survive by ac-

knowledging this fact, and integrating into its agenda, along with the modernization of their role in Aruba's educational process, reaching out to all generations. It is their intention to create several 2 to 5 minute videos which will be posted to Youtube and their website, <http://www.biblioteca-nacional.aw>, to stimulate the community and involve them with their library.

**By Rosalie Klein**



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## Weather Forecast Aruba



WEATHER: PARTLY CLOUDY TO MOSTLY SUNNY.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE 29 CENTIGRADE / MINIMUM TEMPERATURE 25 CENTIGRADE.

SUNRISE 07:06 AM SUNSET 06:37 PM.

WIND: STRONG EASTERN TRADEWINDS AVERAGING 19 KNOTS WITH MAXIMUM OF 30 KNOTS.

GENERAL SITUATION: AN AREA OF HIGH PRESSURE OVER THE ATLANTIC OCEAN IS DIMINISHING IN STRENGTH THEREFORE DIMINISHING THE WINDSPEED. SINCE SUNDAY SOME SAHARA DUST WAS LIMITING OUR VISIBILITY. IT IS FORESEEN THAT THE DUST WILL BECOME LESS.

FURTHERMORE DUE A DRY AIR IN THE LOW LEVELS, CHANCES OF RAIN WILL BE SMALL.

MARINE CONDITIONS: WAVE DIRECTION EAST-NORTHEAST WITH WAVEHEIGHT OF 6 TO 9 FEET. PLEASE USE CAUTION OVER OPEN WATERS.

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## Great humorous reading from Amazon.com... and we are not talking about books!!

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Wood, Shuang, Dongsong (Author)  
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### A must have for you home library

A new art form is emerging on the Internet, comedic reviews on Amazon.com. The merchandising giant is the go-to website for tens of millions who appreciate their vast inventory and purchaser reviews, which assist them in the best way as to how to spend their hard earned money, but it has spawned a form of humor that will keep fans of the genre occupied, and laughing, endlessly.

Among the millions of products offered on Amazon.com there are bound to be a few that will have the ordinary shopper scratching their heads, such as the "JL421 Badonkadonk Land Cruiser/Tank." For a mere \$19,999.95, one can own their own desert cruising, 5-person tank, no ordinance included. There may be a practical purpose for such an item, perhaps a journalist making their way across a war-torn desert? In any case,

such off the wall items, including fresh skinned rabbit, (you might not want to look at the photo during your lunch hour) can only invite witty commentary, and would-be humorists respond in spades.

Regarding the tank: "Finally, a tank you can trust, I'll admit it. Shopping for a personal tank can be a bit daunting. Many times in the past I've purchased overpriced, so-called "battle tanks", then driven them into battle only to be wrecked in ten minutes by the first blow off of some insurgents home-made mortar... I had NAO install the optional GPS-guided white phosphorus missile system, and talk about \*SWEET\*! Burn baby burn!!!"

One rabbit gourmand reports: "Pays for itself! I bought two, left them alone in the refrigerator for a week, and now I have thirty-eight. Off to buy a bigger fridge."

More mundane items have attracted thousands of reviewers, some of which have turned their negative experience into comedy gold. It appears that "Haribo Gummy Candy, Sugarless Gummy Bears, 5-Pound Bag" is the perfect gift to send to the management team of the company that just laid you off after 20 years of dedicated effort and devotion. It is dubbed by one reviewer as "an ideal gift for your congressional representatives." A large majority of the more than 400 comments, graphically descriptive, report the negative aftereffects of consuming the tasty, fruity treats, which appear to have drastic and noisy consequences to the digestive system. "Like trumpets calling the demons back to Hell," cites one reviewer, who will leave you laughing so hard you will be gasping for breath. For the squeamish, this is also not ideal lunchtime reading.

Whether you are seeking to pinpoint UFO's, need to research "The 2009-2014 Outlook for Wood Toilet Seats in Greater China," (a must for any home library and a bargain at only \$470, marked down from \$495!) or are a

JL421 Badonkadonk Land Cruiser/Tank  
by Jim  
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- All with a 5-year warranty on the vehicle.

### Indulge your Star Wars fantasies

devoted David Hasselhoff fan, there is a strange and wondrous item on Amazon.com to satisfy your unique needs.

Hasselhoff's single musical effort could cost you anywhere from \$11.18 for a used CD to \$197 for one in mint condition. "This David is a Goliath," states George Takai (yes, Sulu of the original Star Wars, who is well-known on the Net for his wry humor and commentary) "When 'Knight Rider' and 'Bay Watch' ended, I felt a distinct void in my life. Without Hasselhoff's bouncing pecs gracing my television, life simply felt drab and unfulfilling." A frequent jester of a reviewer, Takai also has this to say about Squirrel Underpants, (don't we all need a pack of those?) "Not recommended for gay hamsters... when we presented the 'Accou-

trements Squirrel Underpants" to Frederick on his birthday, his disappointment was palpable. "Well zen," he quipped crisply, as German hamsters so often do. "Ve are polite and must still appreciate da gesture, no?" Frederick clearly expected something with a bit more "oomph."

We do recommend once you have finished your daily reading of the latest edition of THE MORNING NEWS, and are perhaps laying about the beach seeking distraction while working on your tan, whip out your tablet or iPad and visit Amazon.com for some great entertainment, which requires no video or sound to disturb the tranquility of the beach or your neighbors. Your hysterical laughter might be somewhat disruptive, but share the fun!

By Rosalie Klein





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## Team BoBario to become Department of Community Development



ORANJESTAD -- During a meeting which took place in the Dr. Edward Cheung Center, members of the BoBario TEAM together with members of departments and institutions which work with this team, received a presentation regarding the future of the BoBario TEAM (Your Neighborhood Team).

This team actually resorts under what is known as "Bureau Gemeenschapszin &

Burgerparticipatie"

(Bureau for Public Solidarity and Citizens Participation). During this meeting Prime Minister Eman announced that this bureau will become a department on its own and will be called "the Department of Community Development." The person who directed this bureau during the past years, Mrs. Ruth Tromp-Schoop, did a fantastic job with very little re-



sources.

The primary goal of Team BoBario was to give more attention to the barrios. The government placed a new focus on the neighborhoods around the island. Each barrio has its own characteristics, necessities and particular inclinations. The needs of each barrio are distinct.

The purpose of Team BoBario was to investigate what are the needs in each barrio. Much attention was dedicated to each barrio with visits each week, listening and cataloging the desires and needs of the inhabitants.

All of this has evolved in the Bureau for Popular Solidarity and Citizens Participation, which was managed by Ruth Tromp-Schoop. After 4 years we have concluded that it has the right of existence because there is a need for this work in the barrios. The citizens have embraced this concept and support this initiative of the government for the barrios, according to Minister Eman.

## Mr. Al Tannenbaum celebrates 82nd Birthday on Aruba!



Mr. Al Tannenbaum recently celebrated his 82nd birthday in the company of his beautiful wife Sheila and friends at Chalet Suisse Restaurant. Mr. Tannenbaum fell in love with Aruba 34 years ago. While playing Black Jack his wife noticed that Al had a winning of US\$ 11,000. They decided that this money should be invested in a Timeshare at the Paradise Beach Villas. Mr. Tannenbaum has never missed a year of visiting Aruba for 34 consecutive years. Happy Birthday Al; and we wish you many more birthdays! Congratulations from The Morning News also and many more visits to your home away from home.



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## Conflict-torn C.Africa gets first woman president



BANGUI (AFP) - The mayor of the Central African Republic's capital Bangui was chosen as interim president Monday, becoming the first woman to lead the violence-wracked country, as the European Union agreed to send hundreds of troops to help stem the bloodshed.

Catherine Samba-Panza, a businesswoman with a reputation as a fighter who became Bangui mayor last year, was elected in a second-round vote by the transitional parliament. She now faces the enormous task of restoring peace to the chronically unstable country.

Cheers broke out in the assembly as the result was announced, with lawmakers singing the national anthem in celebration.

In her victory speech, Samba-Panza -- who won 75 votes against 53 for Desire Kolingba, the son of a former president -- called for an end to violence by the mostly Muslim Seleka ex-rebels and Christian self-defence militias known as "anti-balaka" (anti-machete).

"I'm launching a resounding appeal to my anti-balaka children who are listening to me: Show your support for my nomination by giving the strong signal of laying down your weapons," said Samba-Panza, who is Christian but did not campaign on a religious platform.

"To my ex-Seleka children who are also listening to me: Lay down your weapons," she said.

"Stop the suffering of the people."

The 59-year-old called herself "the president of all Central Africans, without exclusion", and said her top priority was "to stop people's suffering, to restore security and the authority of the state across the country".

EU foreign ministers meanwhile agreed to send hundreds of troops to the

country in a rare joint military mission.

The mission, which will deploy in and around the capital and last up to six months, is expected to involve the rapid deployment of a force numbering anywhere from 400 to 1,000.

The troops will help back up 1,600 French soldiers and the African Union's MISCA force, which currently has 4,400 troops on the ground.

International donors also pledged \$496 million (365 million euros) in aid to the country this year.

### 'CAR is in free-fall'

Samba-Panza's election comes 10 months after the Seleka rebels overthrew the government and installed their leader, Michel Djotodia, as the country's first Muslim president.

But Djotodia proved powerless to control his fighters, and many went on a rampage of killing, rapes and looting targeting the Christian majority.

Some Christian communities responded by forming self-defence militias and attacking Muslims. Rights watchdogs accuse both sides of major abuses, and the United Nations has warned of a potential inter-religious genocide.

Djotodia stood down under international pressure on January 10.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said Monday the Central African Republic is "caught in a crisis of epic proportions".

"The CAR is in free-fall... We must act together, and act now, to pull CAR back from the brink of further atrocities," he said in a statement.

The UN's top human rights body appointed an expert to probe violations in the country, Ivory Coast national Marie-Therese Keita Bocoum, who has previously worked in Burundi and Sudan's Darfur region.

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## Ban boots Iran out of Syria peace talks

Cont. from pg 1

UN officials said Zarif had apparently promised Ban a statement accepting the Geneva communique would be made.

But just before the UN announcement, Iran's envoy to the United Nations, Mohammad Khazaei, reaffirmed his government's rejection of conditions for attending this week's meeting.

"Iran has always been supportive of finding a political solution for this crisis," Khazaei said in a statement.

"If the participation of Iran is conditioned to accept Geneva I communique, Iran will not participate in Geneva II," he added.

Ban had contacts with the US and Russian foreign ministers before excluding Iran again.

The Syrian National

Coalition, the main opposition, welcomed Ban's about turn and said it would be in Switzerland this week.

Although the talks start in Montreux on Wednesday, the Syrian government and opposition will start talks in Geneva on Friday.

The conference still faces major obstacles which were highlighted by new attacks spilling over into Syria's neighbors and Assad's refusal to consider standing down -- a key demand of the Syrian opposition.

### Car bombing kills 16

A double suicide car bombing at a border post controlled by moderate Islamist rebels between Syria and Turkey killed at least 16 people on Monday, a monitoring group said.

And adding to the ten-

sions, Assad bluntly ruled out a power-sharing deal in an AFP interview. He insisted that the peace conference should focus on what he called his "war against terrorism".

Assad adopted a combative tone, dismissing the opposition as having been "created" by foreign backers and saying he saw no reason he should not seek a new term as president in an election he wants to hold in June.

The Syrian opposition, the United States and European powers have all said Assad cannot be part of any future Syria.

A US official said Washington had received messages from members of the Damascus regime keen to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.





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## Russia hunts as many as 4 'black widow' bombers before Olympics



RUSSIA - Russian authorities are looking for as many four women who could be used in terrorist attacks during the Winter Olympic games — including one suspect who may have already slipped through the ring of security in Sochi.

Ruzanna (Salima) Ibragimova, 22 — the widow of an Islamic militant killed during a gun battle with police last year — has been missing from her Dagestan home since last month, ABC News reported.

Wanted posters with Ibragimova's picture littered area hotels and even a nearby airport last weekend, the news station reported, after authorities launched a massive search for the woman.

The posters describe Ibragimova as having a 10-centime-

ter scar across her left cheek and a stiff left arm, because she can't bend her elbow.

Investigators believe she may have entered the city about 10 days ago, according to the report.

Ibragimova is one of as many as four "black widows" — the term given to the wives of dead terrorists — who being sought by security officials, NBC News reported.

The women are often recruited as suicide bombers by terror cells for their ability to get past security check points because they do not fit the typical profile of an Islamic militant.

The search added fear to growing security concerns surrounding the Olympics, which are scheduled to open on Feb. 6.

On Sunday, a terrorist group

who claimed responsibility for a pair of suicide bombings that killed 34 people in Volgograd posted a video to a jihadi forum warning an attack during the Olympics.

The men in the hour-long clip threatened "a surprise package" for President Vladimir Putin and the people attending the games.

Russian officials have maintained the event will remain safe, but some experts suggested that news of Ibragimova being in the city should be a sign of a weak security plan.

United States military and intelligence officials have been quietly planning a contingency plan to evacuate Americans from Sochi in case of a possible terror attack, the Guardian reported.

The plan also includes a way to bring in supplies or military forces for a rescue, despite any friction with Russian officials.

"No matter what happens, (the Russians) are not going to welcome with open arms" any outside intervention, a source told the Guardian.

Putin said he is already taking every precaution necessary to protect everyone who participates or attends the Olympic games.

## Mexico disarms 1,200 police accused of gang ties

MORELIA (AFP) - Mexico has disarmed more than 1,200 local police officers suspected of colluding with drug traffickers in Michoacan state and arrested 38 members of the notorious Knights Templar drug cartel active in the region.

Among those arrested was Jesus Vasquez Macias, 37, who goes by the alias "El Toro," a leading figure in the cartel, Monte Alejandro Rubido Garcia, a top federal security official, announced late Sunday.

Garcia said federal forces have taken control of 27 municipalities in the western Mexico state and disarmed 1,209 of the local police officers.

The officers will undergo investigations, Garcia said.

They are accused of colluding with gangs by the vigilante militias that have taken up arms in recent months in restive Michoacan state.

The self-defense groups, made up of farmers and other local people, aimed to take over from local police to oust the Knights Templar from the region to stop the group's violence, kidnapping and extortion rackets.

Since February 2013, the self-defense groups have taken control over some 20 towns.

In recent days, federal forces launched a major operation in the state and tried to disarm the vigilantes as well as flush out the Knights Templar gang.

The capture of Vasquez Macias and other Knights Templar leaders was among the conditions the vigilante groups demanded before giving in to government demands they turn over their own weapons.

Vasquez Macias, who was picked up in the port city of Lazaro Cardenas, was charged with offenses related to organized crime, Rubido Garcia said.

Michoacan, where much of the population lives in poverty, has become the most pressing security issue facing Mexico President Enrique Pena Nieto, who inherited a bloody war on drugs from his predecessor in 2012 that has left more than 77,000 people dead since it was launched in 2006.





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## Sunlight helps blood pressure risk: study



PARIS (AFP) - Sunlight may help to reduce high blood pressure, a danger factor for heart attacks and stroke, a study published in a specialist journal said on Monday.

British researchers found exposure to sunlight alters the level of nitric oxide in the skin, dilating blood vessels and thus easing hypertension.

"Small amounts of NO [nitric oxide] are transferred from the skin to the circulation, lowering blood vessel tone," said Martin Feelisch, a professor of experimental medicine at the University of Southampton in southern England.

"As blood pressure drops, so does the risk of heart attack and stroke."

The team analysed 24 volunteers who were exposed to ultraviolet (UVA) light from tanning lamps for two 20-minute sessions.

In one session, the volunteers were exposed to both the UVA rays and the heat of the

lamps.

In the second, the UV was blocked so that only the heat of the lamps affected the skin.

The findings back up data about blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, which are known to vary according to season and latitude.

Higher levels are observed in winter and in countries that are farther from the equator, where ultraviolet from the sun is lower.

"These results are significant to the ongoing debate about potential health benefits of sunlight and the role of Vitamin D in this process," Feelisch said in a press release.

"Avoiding excess sunlight exposure is critical to prevent skin cancer, but not being exposed to it at all, out of fear or as a result of a certain lifestyle, could increase the risk of cardiovascular disease."

The investigation appears in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology.

## Smoking pot no more dangerous than drinking: Obama

WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama says smoking pot is no more dangerous than drinking but calls it a "bad idea," amid a push for legalization in several states.

In comments to The New Yorker magazine published Sunday, the US leader also noted that poor minority youths are more likely to get prison time for using marijuana than their richer counterparts.

"As has been well documented, I smoked pot as a kid, and I view it as a bad habit and a vice, not very different from the cigarettes that I smoked as a young person up through a big chunk of my adult life," Obama said.

"I don't think it is more dangerous than alcohol."

He added that he has told his two daughters Sasha and Malia that "it's a bad idea, a waste of time, not very healthy."

Obama, in a wide-ranging series of interviews with the prestigious publication, went on to say that "middle-class kids don't get locked up for smoking pot, and poor kids do."

"And African-American kids and Latino kids are more likely to be poor and less likely to have the resources and the support to avoid unduly harsh



penalties," he added.

In that vein, Obama welcomed the recent legalization of marijuana in Colorado and Washington.

"It's important for society not to have a situation in which a large portion of people have at one time or another broken the law and only a select few get punished," he said.

Couching his remarks somewhat, Obama called the move in the two states a challenging "experiment."

"Those who argue that legalizing marijuana is a panacea and it solves all these social problems I think are probably overstating the case," he added.

And Obama stopped short

of calling for legalizing the drug at the federal level.

Colorado and Washington are creating a recreational market in which local authorities will oversee growing, distribution and marketing -- all of it legal -- for people to get high just for the fun of it.

While Colorado's law went into effect January 1, Washington's recreational marijuana shops are expected to open later this year.

Obama made a distinction between marijuana and more potent drugs.

"I also think that, when it comes to harder drugs, the harm done to the user is profound and the social costs are profound," he said.





## 'Ride Along' steers to top of N. American box office

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Police comedy "Ride Along" made its debut at the top of the North American box office, arresting viewers' attention over the US holiday weekend, industry estimates showed Sunday.

The film, starring funnyman Kevin Hart and Ice Cube, raked in \$41.2 million over the normal Friday-to-Sunday weekend, pushing last week's favorite, "Lone Survivor," into second place, according to box office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

Over the four-day Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend that includes Monday, the cop duo pulled in \$47.7 million compared to \$27.6 by the Afghan war drama.

"Lone Survivor," starring Mark Wahlberg, is based on a book by the only Navy SEAL commando to survive a raid targeting an Islamist fighter, one of the war's deadliest incidents.

In a weekend of multiple movie debuts, "The Nut Job," an animated tale about a squirrel forced from his park and into the big city, took in \$27.2 million over four days, scoring third place in the box office.

And "Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit" debuted in fourth with \$20.0 million. The action adventure, starring Chris Pine, is a prequel and fifth film in the series based on author Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan books.

The franchise began with 1990's "The Hunt for Red October," and has starred Alec Baldwin, Harrison Ford and Ben Affleck in the leading role over the years.

Falling to fifth place was Disney animated musical "Frozen," a loosely based retelling of a Hans Christian Andersen fairytale. It added another \$16.4 million in earnings, bringing its nine-week North American total to \$337 million.

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## 'We love Elton John,' Putin says in bid to deflect anti-gay controversy

MOSCOW (AFP) - President Vladimir Putin said Sunday that Russia does not discriminate against gays and that millions of Russians love pop icon Elton John "despite his orientation", as he sought to defuse calls from gay rights activists to boycott the Winter Olympics.

In an interview with foreign journalists less than three weeks before the opening of the Olympics in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, Putin reiterated

that Russia would welcome all athletes and visitors, regardless of their sexuality.

"People have different sexual orientation. We will welcome all athletes and all guests of the Olympics," he said.

By way of example, he praised John, who is openly gay, as "an outstanding person (and) outstanding musician".

"Millions of our people sincerely love him despite his orientation," Putin said.

Gay rights activists have

criticised the Russian strongman for a recent law banning the dissemination of so-called "gay propaganda" to minors.

John himself spoke out against the law during a sold-out Moscow concert last month. "I am deeply saddened and shocked over the current legislation that is now in place against the (homosexual) community here in Russia," he said. "In my opinion, it is inhumane and it is isolating. Harmony is what makes a happy

family and a strong society."

The 66-year-old Briton has a long history of performances in Russia, beginning with a groundbreaking concert in 1979 that made him a household name in the then-Soviet Union.

He ignored calls to cancel his December concerts in the wake of the "gay propaganda" law, saying Russia's gays and lesbians would feel abandoned if big-name performers did not come for visits and offer them

support.

"People with non-traditional sexual orientation cannot feel like they are second-rate because they are in no way discriminated against: not professionally, not career-wise, not when it comes to recognition by society," he said.

The Russian strongman also downplayed planned no-shows at the Olympics by Western leaders including US President Barack Obama and French President Francois Hollande.



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## Yoko Ono asks Japan dolphin fishermen to stop

TOKYO (AFP) - The Japanese widow of John Lennon on Monday added her voice to pleas to dolphin fishermen that they stop their hunt, days after the US ambassador to Tokyo waded into the row.

Yoko Ono published an open letter to the men of Taiji, the small town made famous by the Oscar-winning film "The Cove" which depicts the annual bloodbath, in which she urged them to halt the cull for the "future of Japan".

Ono said the hunt, in which scores of animals are corralled into a cove, with the prettiest selected for sale to aquariums and the rest butchered for meat, was damaging the reputation of Japan.

It "will give an excuse for big countries and their chil-

dren in China, India and Russia to speak ill of Japan," she wrote.

"I am sure that it is not easy, but please consider the safety of the future of Japan, surrounded by many powerful countries which are always looking for the chance to weaken the power of our country.

The reference was to the 2011 triple meltdowns at Fukushima after their reactors were swamped by a huge tsunami.

The letter, which was posted on her "Imagine Peace" website and addressed to "Japanese fishermen of Taiji", bore her signature and was dated 20 January, 2014. At the foot, it said: "cc Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe".

## EU warns of Bisphe nol health threat

BRUSSELS (AFP) - The EU food safety watchdog warned that exposure levels to Bisphe nol A (BPA), already implicated as a health concern for babies, should be cut by a factor of 10.

The European Food Safety Authority said a review of recent studies showed "exposure to BPA is likely to adversely affect the kidney and liver, as well as causing effects on the mammary gland."

BPA may also have an effect on the "reproductive, nervous, immune, metabolic and cardiovascular systems, as well as in the development of cancer," it said.

Although this link is not "considered likely at present," the possibility adds "to the overall uncertainty about the risks of the substance," it said in a statement.

Accordingly, it recommended that the tolerable daily intake of BPA be cut by a factor of 10, on a temporary basis.

At the same time, the EFSA said the "health risk for all population groups is low - including for foetuses, infants, young children and adults," given current exposure levels which are already below its recommendation.

The presence of BPA, a synthetic compound found in certain plastics, has sparked a ban on baby feeding bottles. It is also found in cash register receipts and in the linings of food cans.

Some studies have suggested it can disrupt hormones and tests on laboratory animals have linked it to brain and nervous system problems, reproductive disorders and obesity.

The EFSA said it was now launching a public consultation on its findings through to March 13, with conclusions due later in the year.

## Violence-torn Venezuela creates phone 'panic button'

CARACAS (AFP) - A free app for certain smartphones that works as a "panic button" in emergencies has launched in Venezuela, one of the world's most violent countries, a lawmaker said Saturday.

The "pocket police" app "allows people to notify their families in real-time of emergencies, without collapsing the Venezuelan security system," explained Ricardo Sanchez, a member of the National Assembly's Domestic Policy Committee.

"You can add up to three contacts, with emails and phone numbers, who will receive the message with your geo-referenced location in case of an emergency," he said.

According to the lawmaker, sending the message -- a text or email -- just requires touching a button on screen.

It could also help police in kidnapping and murder cases, he said, since the information "can help provide details on the last location of the person."



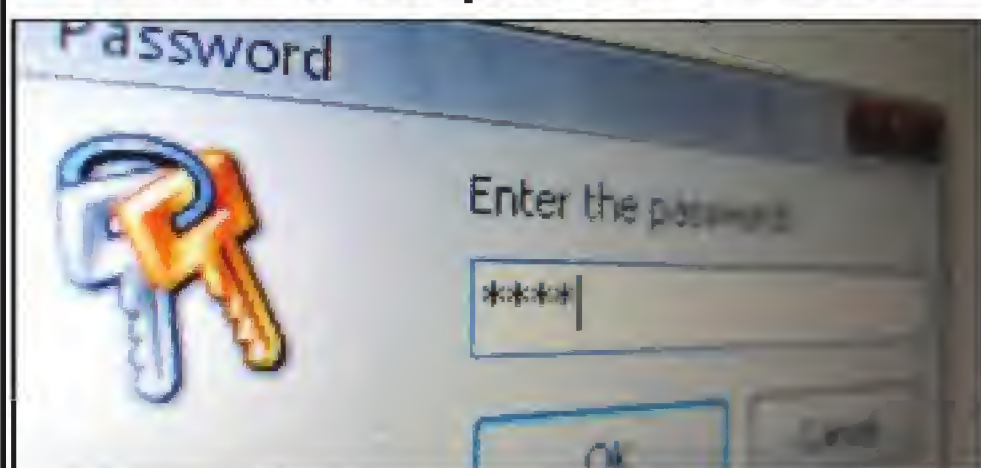
The application, which was developed by Sanchez along with a team of computer experts from two Venezuela universities -- is only available on Blackberry devices currently.

Sanchez said he hopes to make improvements based on suggestions from the Venezuela science and technology ministry and local municipalities.

Venezuela's homicide rate according to NGOs is 79 per 100,000 people, the highest in the world -- though the government figure is lower, at 39 per 100,000.

In 2013, the Venezuelan Violence Monitor NGO counted more than 24,000 deaths.

## '123456' worst password of 2013




NEW YORK - According to a new list of the worst passwords of 2013 from security-focused developer SplashData that lists "123456" as the most common and new worst password on the Internet, unseating "password," which topped the previous year's list. The list was compiled from data dumps of stolen passwords posted online, and the firm says it was especially influenced by the millions of Adobe accounts that were compromised in the fall. Stricture Consulting Group attempted to decrypt the leaked Adobe passwords and released an estimate that almost 2 million of the more than 130 million users affected by the breach appeared to be using "123456" as a password. Passwords like 'adobe123' and 'photoshop' also make SplashData's top 25 list thanks to the breadth of the Adobe hack. To better protect your data without memorizing myriad strings of nonsense numbers, letters and symbols, SplashData recommends passwords that contain random words separated by spaces or characters like this bit of Yoda-speak: "trolls\_jobs\_need" or "Crave\_love\_I\_do."

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Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.65
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.97
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	197.23
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	244.05
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.05
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.95
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	29.39
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	173.02

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## Investors keen for more info on Puerto Rican debt

NEW YORK (AFP) - Hedge funds and other investors met in New York to examine the implications and opportunities of Puerto Rico's growing debt crisis, including a potential debt restructuring.

Organizers of the meeting on the US territory had to reject requests to attend after reaching the capacity of 200, said Scott Greenberg, a restructuring attorney with global law firm Jones Day that hosted the meeting.

Jones Day is a leader in bankruptcy practices, and serves as the lead counsel for the city of Detroit, which filed for bankruptcy protection last July, the largest US municipal bankruptcy to date.

The New York meeting came as concerns mount over Puerto Rico's precarious financial condition as its economy stagnates. The Caribbean island of 3.7 million has some \$70 billion in debt plus another roughly \$40 billion in under-funded pensions.

Jones Day's meeting was aimed at informing bondholders of their rights in case of a debt restructuring or a potential government liquidity squeeze, Greenberg told AFP.

before the meeting got under way.

Attendees were expected to include potential new investors who may see opportunity in Puerto Rican bonds now available on the secondary market for pennies on the dollar, Greenberg said.

"Most hedge funds that have a lot of capital to deploy (are) at least getting smart on it because it's potentially somewhere where they can put their money to work," said the lawyer.

The Puerto Rican government said that it "will take every step necessary to continue honoring its obligations" in a statement it said it released "in response to speculation on Puerto Rico's credit."

The statement came after press accounts of the New York investors meeting, but did not name the organizer, Jones Day.

"We believe it is not unusual, as part of the normal investment process, for private investors to meet with advisors to discuss a range of issues," said the statement from the Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico.

The Jones Day meeting came a day after another New York event on the Puerto Rico debt outlook, organized by the non-profit organization the Global Interdependence Center, that drew some 160 attendees.

Ratings firm Moody's managing director Robert Kurtter, in a presentation at the non-profit's event Wednesday, said Puerto Rico was under review for a possible downgrade.

He cited the government's weakening liquidity, its increasing reliance on external short-term debt and "uncertain prospects for growth in a persistently sluggish economy."

## Panama canal expansion row hits deadline

PANAMA CITY (AFP) - A bitter financial dispute disrupting a megaproject to expand the Panama Canal hit a key deadline Monday but a threatened work stoppage appeared to have been averted for now.

The Grupo Unidos por el Canal (GUPEC) consortium, led by Spanish builder Sacyr, had said it might stop work by Monday unless Panama agreed to pay for \$1.6 billion in cost overruns.

However, the consortium said Sunday in a statement that there was "no reason to make any change tomorrow in the status of the construction," adding that GUPEC could cease work at any time as it deemed necessary.

GUPEC, which includes Impregilo of Italy, Belgium's Jan de Nul and Constructora Urbana of Panama, has agreed to negotiate with the canal authority within the contract.

The overall canal upgrade is costing \$5.2 billion, including GUPEC's \$3.2 billion contract to build a third set of locks for the century-old canal, which

currently welcomes ships that carry up to 5,000 containers.

Already facing delays, the project aims to make the 80-kilometer (50-mile) waterway, which handles five percent of global maritime trade, big enough to handle new cargo ships that can carry 12,000 containers.

In the current dispute, GUPEC says it ran into costly overruns because the canal authority gave the builders the wrong information regarding the area's geology.

The expansion work on the canal began in 2009 with the goal of being done by 2014 to coincide with the waterway's 100th birthday, but completion was pushed back to 2015 after a first disagreement between the canal authority and GUPEC over cement quality.

Then on December 30, the consortium threatened to halt work on the third set of locks, the most important part of the expansion project, giving the canal authority 21 days to agree to pay the \$1.6 billion in unanticipated costs.

The dispute has reached the European Commission, whose vice president Antonio Tajani has offered to mediate.

The European Commission is seeking "a financial solution so that the companies can resolve an immediate liquidity problem and the work can continue at the expected pace," Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo said Monday.

A construction delay could cost Panama an estimated \$300 to \$400 million in lost business from the huge container ships.

The ripple effects would be broader still, given the importance to East-West trade of a widened waterway, which would double the amount of cargo that could be moved between the Pacific and the Atlantic.

The United States already has spent millions of dollars adapting its ports on the Gulf of Mexico and the US East Coast to receive the large container ships.

## ILO warns of jobless recovery

GENEVA (AFP) - Global unemployment climbed by five million people in 2013 to 202 million despite green shoots in the world economy, signalling a jobless recovery, the International Labour Organisation said on Monday.

Business activity is picking up but the misery of unemployment continues to pile up.

"We continue to be on an upward trajectory in terms of unemployment in the world," Guy Ryder, the UN labour agency's director general, told reporters.

"What is perhaps equally concerning is that, on current trends, and notwithstanding the modest recovery in growth that we are seeing, unemployment will continue to increase in coming years," Ryder said as he released the ILO's annual employment report.

By 2018, about 215 million people worldwide are expected to be unemployed, according to the ILO.

A global labour market recovery is being held back by a shortfall in demand, the ILO said, noting that in many developed economies, cuts in public spending and increases in income and consumption taxes were weighing heavily on businesses and households.

In addition, the financial sector remains troubled, credit is still hard to obtain for small businesses in many economies,

and wage rises have lagged behind increases in productivity.

North Africa remained the hardest-hit region of the globe in 2013, with an unemployment rate of 12.2 percent, followed by the Middle East on 10.9 percent.

Europe, North America and other developed economies followed on 8.6 percent, ahead of ex-Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union's 8.2 percent, and Sub-Saharan Africa's 7.6 percent.

The rate in Latin America and the Caribbean was 6.5 percent.

In East Asia -- a label covering China -- the level was 4.5 percent, while the rates in

Southeast Asia and the Pacific, and South Asia, were 4.2 percent and 4.0 percent respectively.

Youth unemployment -- which the ILO counts as covering potential workers aged between 15 and 24 years -- remained a major concern.

It stood at 13 percent last year, far outstripping the 6.0 percent average global rate of joblessness.

He urged governments to pay particular attention to the so-called "NEETS" -- young people who are neither in employment, education nor training -- whose levels he said had reached "epidemic proportions" in hard-hit nations.

### YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

	B	A	L	K		S	L	A	T
M	O	S	A	I	C		C	O	C
I	N	L	I	N	E		O	N	T
S	E	E	R		A	T	R	I	S
T	R	E			S	A	C		
	S	P	A	C	E	S	H	I	P
			P	O	L			D	E
P	E	T	I	T	E		M	L	L
O	K	R	A		S	P	I	E	L
N	E	A	R		S	E	C	R	E
E	S	P	Y		Z	E	S	T	



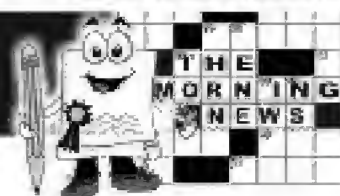
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## COMICS



## CROSSWORD



## CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- 1 Stylish  
5 Strainer  
10 Subtle air  
11 Undo laces  
12 Translator  
14 Hamilton's prov.  
15 Lone Star State  
16 Sheep's covering  
18 Mrs., in Madrid  
19 \_\_\_ Domini  
20 Example  
24 Vaude-villian's joke  
27 Grand-stand section  
28 Remove frost from a wind-shield  
30 Zenith rival (abbr.)  
31 They replaced adding machines  
34 Facing the pitcher (2 wds.)  
35 Tried and

- 36 Norman Vincent  
37 Berra's glove

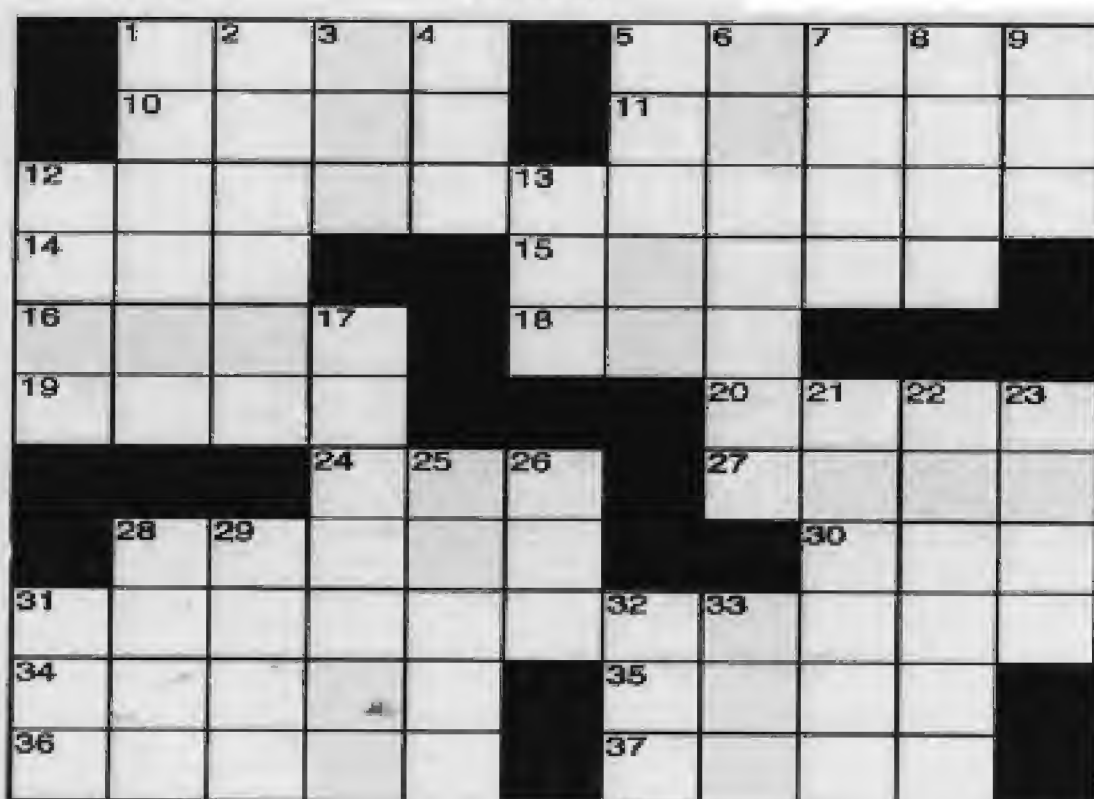
## DOWN

- 1 Big gun  
2 "When E.F. \_\_\_ talks..."  
3 Intense rage  
4 Train component  
5 More certain  
6 Not

- precise  
7 Comics' Kett  
8 Contends  
9 Always, in poems  
12 Hawkeye State  
13 Liquid measures (abbr.)  
17 Like Mr. Spock  
21 Ventilate (2 wds.)  
22 Confidential  
23 Notable periods  
25 Keen  
26 Hair goop  
28 Escort  
29 Napoleon's isle  
31 Tooth cover  
32 Banking machine (abbr.)  
33 Cycle starter

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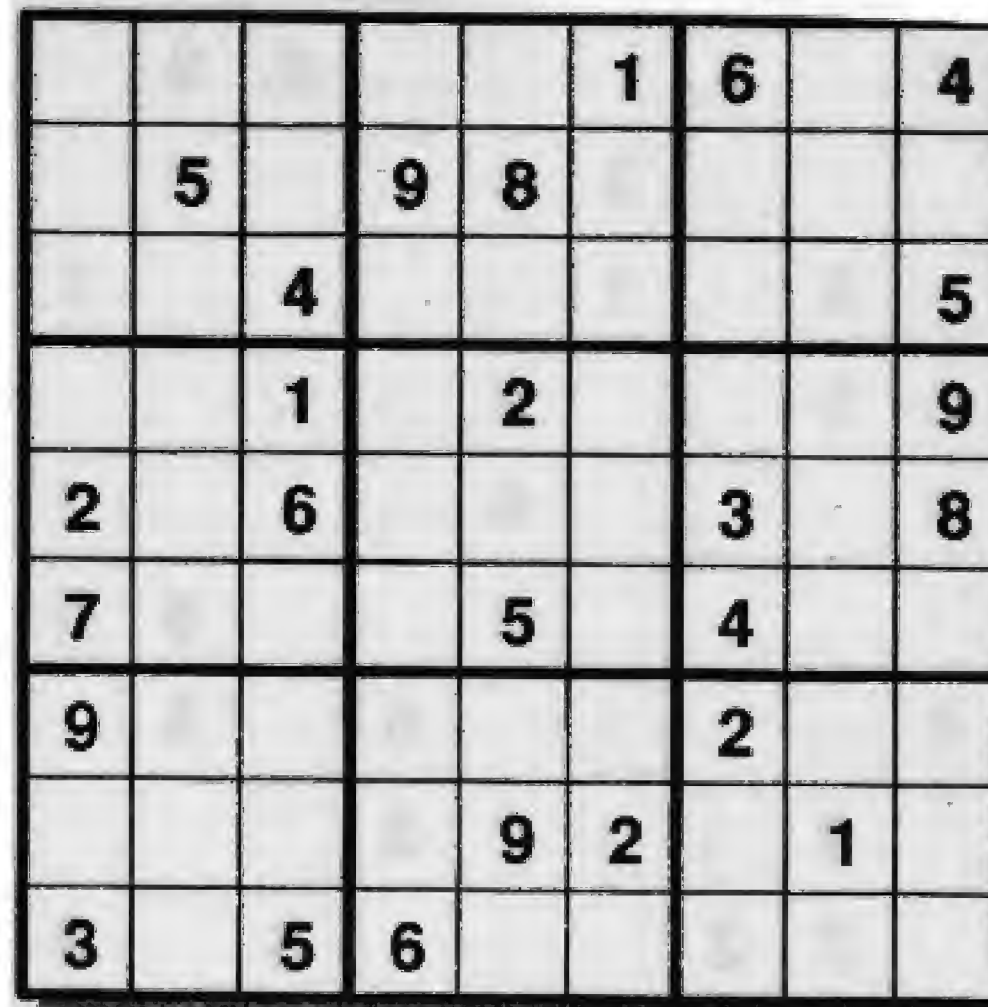
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## Sudoku



## SOLUTION

2	4	6	8	1	9	5	2	3
6	1	5	2	8	2	8	9	7
8	8	2	5	4	3	2	1	6
1	2	7	9	5	8	6	3	2
8	5	6	2	1	9	7	2	4
6	9	2	8	2	7	1	8	5
5	3	9	2	9	2	7	6	1
2	2	1	4	8	8	6	5	9
4	6	9	1	6	5	2	2	8

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9  
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.  
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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## 5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



**Delicious Breakfast**

--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on para-

dise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an internationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 8am, patrons can now order 2

eggs any style (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) and toast for a price of only \$4.99 or All You Can Eat Pancakes for \$6.99! A new plate called the "Home Run" comes with 2 eggs, bacon or sausage, 2 pancakes, toast & home fries - for only \$9.99! Best of all - unlimited coffee or tea - that is, refillable and never ending is only \$7.99! Breakfast is served from 8am until noon. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice

beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.



5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to

make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

**5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish Sunday-Thursday; and until 3am on Friday & Saturdays.**

**Delivery is available to most Hotels and most beaches!** Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic,

heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.



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## Boxing: Alvarez comeback, three title bouts set for March

LAS VEGAS (AFP) - Former world light middleweight champion Saul "Canelo" Alvarez will make his return to the ring after a loss to Floyd Mayweather on a March 8 card with three world title bouts, promoters said Friday.

Mexico's Alvarez, 42-1-1 with 30 knockouts, dropped a majority decision to the unbeaten American last September to lose the World Boxing Association and World Boxing Council crowns.

Alvarez, a 23-year-old whose nickname is Spanish for Cinnamon, will face compatriot Alfredo Angulo, 22-3 with 18 knockouts.

Also on the card will be Mexico's unbeaten Leo Santa Cruz, 27-0 with one draw and 15 knockouts, defending the WBC super bantamweight title against Mexican southpaw and former world champion Cristian Mijares, 49-7 with two



drawn and 24 knockouts.

Mexico's Carlos Molina, 22-5 with two drawn and six knockouts, makes the first defense of his International Boxing Federation junior middleweight title against unbeaten American Jermall Charlo, 17-0 with 13 knockouts.

Alvarez's brother Ricardo, 23-2 with three drawn and 14 knockouts, gets into the act when he challenges unbeaten Omar Figueroa, 24-0 with one

draw and 17 knockouts, for the WBC interim lightweight crown.

American Adrien Broner won the WBC lightweight title last February but has fought his past two bouts at welterweight and invoked a rematch clause to avenge his first career loss for another fight against Argentina's Marcos Madana, which means the interim champion is likely to take over the full title.

## Tennis: Sharapova out as Nadal, Federer into last eight

MELBOURNE (AFP) - Maria Sharapova crashed out of the Australian Open in another seismic shock Monday as Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer and Victoria Azarenka saw off challenges to keep their title bids intact.

A day after Serena Williams' exit, Dominika Cibulkova kept the upsets rolling as she ousted injury-compromised Sharapova 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, blowing the women's draw even further open.

The main expected beneficiary, two-time defending champion Azarenka, is in position to take full advantage after she flattened old foe Sloane Stephens 6-3, 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals.

The Belarusian world number two will face Polish fifth

seed Agnieszka Radwanska in the quarter-finals, with Cibulkova heading into a clash with Romania's Simona Halep.

Men's top seed Nadal weathered a sustained assault from Japan's Kei Nishikori 7-6 (7/3), 7-5, 7-6 (7/3) to face Grigor Dimitrov in the Bulgarian's first Grand Slam quarter-final.

The 13-time Grand Slam winner chided the umpire after he was called for a time violation, for taking longer than the allowed 20 seconds between points, at a critical moment in the third set.

"The negative thing in my opinion is not the warning but the timing of it. You can choose another moment to do it, not that one," Nadal said.

Wimbledon champion Andy

Murray needed five match points and four sets -- and angrily demolished a racquet along the way -- before beating 'lucky loser' Stephane Robert.

Murray cruised through the first two sets but he missed match points, and then dropped his first set of the tournament, before finishing it off 6-1, 6-2, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2.

Federer, meanwhile, was a convincing winner against Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, racing through 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 to set up a quarter-final against Murray. There was some consolation for Sharapova when her boyfriend Dimitrov, 22, won 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 against Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain.

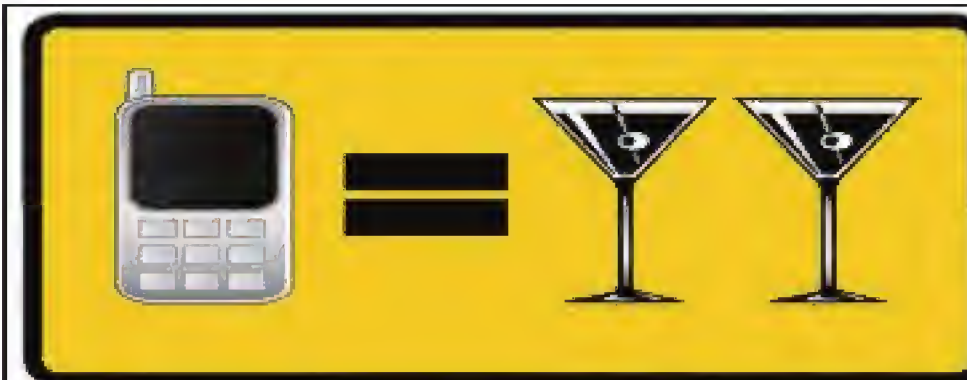
## BRIEFS:



LONDON (AFP) - The sponsor of English Premier League club West Bromwich Albion announced Monday they would not renew their deal at the end of the season in the wake of striker Nicolas Anelka's controversial 'quenelle' gesture. Lawrence Hall, head of communications for property website Zoopla, said: "In recent weeks we have decided to re-evaluate this sponsorship and as a result we will focus our attention on other marketing activities from the end of the season." However, West Brom tried to downplay the impact of Zoopla's move by saying they had long been preparing to seek another sponsor. Former France striker Anelka, 34, sparked a media storm last month when he celebrated the first of his two goals in West Brom's 3-3 league draw at West Ham United by putting one arm across his chest and straightening the other in a gesture interpreted by some as anti-Semitic.



PARIS (AFP) - In less than two days, a crowdfunding site has helped raise more than \$25,000 for the Jamaican bobsled team headed to the Sochi Olympics. Jamaica's bobsleigh team have been given the nod to compete in the Sochi Olympics, their national Olympic Association (JOA) confirmed on Monday. It will be the third Winter Games for a team from the sun-drenched Caribbean island who first qualified in 1988 for Calgary, an achievement that later inspired the movie "Cool Runnings." They last competed in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Driver Winston Watts and brakeman Marvin Dixon will compete in the two-man bob in the 32-team competition on February 19 and 20. Watts said he spent £100,000 (121,000 euro/\$164,000) of his own money in an attempt to ensure qualification. Their appeal for funds had been echoed on the Team Jamaica Twitter site, @JamaicaOlympics. Jamaican Chef de Mission Nelson Christian Stokes is scheduled to arrive in Sochi on February 3 and the team - Watts, Dixon, Wayne Blackwood (reserve crew) and Thomas Samuel (coach) - will arrive on February 4.





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## Aruba Taekwondo Foundation's President visits training selection

ORANJESTAD - Last Friday, Marilu de Veer, President of Aruba Taekwondo Foundation paid a courtesy visit to the training at Skoa which is under the guidance of Aruba's trainer, Theo Rodriguez. President Marilu de Veer spoke to the Cadets, Juniors and Seniors who are training for important international championships on the program of the Aruba Taekwondo Foundation.

Every Friday, Theo Rodriguez trains the Cadets so they can choose their team to represent Aruba at the international championships on their program. From Monday to Thursday

Rodriguez trains all three groups, but on Fridays he concentrates on the Cadets. These are young people between 12



and 14 years of age. This year will be the first World Championship for Cadets in Azerbaijan. This year they will also have the World Championship for Juniors and other international championships. Aruba scored very well last year and we are focusing on doing even better this year, says Ro-

driquez.

Aruba has a new board for the Taekwondo. They have a big vision for our athletes. They want to see them realizing their dreams. Rodriguez is working hard with our athletes so that we can put the Aruban flag and name much higher in international Taekwondo.



## Ronaldo honoured by Portuguese President



LISBON (AFP) - Cristiano Ronaldo was on Monday awarded one of the most prestigious honours in Portugal from the country's President Anibal Cavaco Silva. The Portugal captain and Real Madrid forward was awarded the Ordem do Infante Dom Henrique, the Order of Prince Henry, in the presidential palace in Lisbon. The 28-year-old received an honour that was created in 1960 to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of one of the most important figures in the Portuguese Empire. The ceremony took place at the presidential palace in Belem, just outside Lisbon, a week after Ronaldo won the Ballon d'Or title for the second time, and the world's top footballer brought his new trophy with him.

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## FIFA's Valcke says confident Brazil will deliver

SAO PAULO (AFP) - FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke on Monday said he was confident World Cup hosts Brazil would deliver despite lingering concerns over late stadium completions.

Work at the stadium has been running behind schedule following a fatal accident in late November which saw a crane fall onto part of the stand and crush two construction workers.

The accident forced FIFA to scrap an initial December 31 deadline for all 12 venues to be ready and Sao Paulo is only set to hold pre-event tests from mid-April.

But he added that he believed Brazil will rise to the challenge of hosting its first World Cup since 1950.



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## NFL: Seahawks to face Broncos in Super Bowl showdown

DENVER (AFP) - Peyton Manning's record-setting Denver Broncos pass attack will face the Seattle Seahawks in next month's Super Bowl showdown after both teams captured tense home playoff triumphs on Sunday.

Seattle, who boast the best defense in NFL, forced three turnovers in the fourth quarter to beat San Francisco 49ers 23-17 in the National Conference final while Manning led the Broncos over the New England Patriots 26-16 in the American Conference final.

After sharing the NFL's best record at 13-3 in the regular season, the Broncos and Seahawks will meet in Super Bowl 48 on February 2 at suburban New York.

It will be Denver's seventh trip to the Super Bowl but the first since the Broncos' only wins in 1998 and 1999, and the second visit for the Seahawks, who lost to Pittsburgh in 2006.

"This feels even sweeter," Seahawks owner Paul Allen said.

Manning, who set one-season NFL passing yardage and touchdown records last month for the most prolific scoring offense in NFL history, completed 32-of-43 passes for 400 yards and two touchdowns.

New England's Tom Brady



SEATTLE, WA (AFP) - Cornerback Richard Sherman #25 of the Seattle Seahawks tips the ball up in the air as outside linebacker Malcolm Smith #53 catches it to clinch the victory for the Seahawks against the San Francisco 49ers

leads the all-time rivalry with Manning 10-5 but fell to 2-2 in their playoff meetings, which in each prior case were taken by the eventual Super Bowl champion.

The 49ers, who lost last year's Super Bowl to Baltimore, saw their hopes end on Malcolm Smith's interception with 22 seconds remaining.

Denver's Matt Prater kicked four field goals while Manning flipped touchdown passes of 1 yard to Jacob Tamme and 3 yards to Demaryius Thomas.

The Patriots, in their first

road playoff game since 2007, fell behind 13-3 at half-time and Brady, who rallied the Patriots from a 24-0 deficit to defeat Denver in the regular season for the greatest comeback of his career, struggled most of the day against Denver's defenders.

At Seattle, the 49ers took a 10-0 lead on Phil Dawson's 25-yard field goal and a 1-yard Anthony Dixon touchdown plunge that was set up by a 58-yard run by quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

In front of a raucous Seattle



DENVER, CO (AFP) - : Shane Vereen #34 of the New England Patriots fails to score on a two-point conversion attempt in the fourth quarter.

crowd, Steven Hauschka kicked a 32-yard field goal to pull the Seahawks within 10-3 at half-time.

Seattle's Marshawn Lynch broke up the middle and ran 40 yards for a touchdown to lift the hosts level.

San Francisco responded when Kaepernick connected with Anquan Boldin on a 26-yard touchdown pass to put the 49ers ahead 17-10.

Hauschka kicked a 40-yard field goal to pull Seattle within 17-13 after three quarters, then Wilson tossed the go-ahead TD pass to Kearse and Hauschka added a 47-yard field goal for the final points.

Kaepernick drove the 49ers toward a potential winning touchdown late in the game but Seattle's Richard Sherman, who led the NFL with eight interceptions, deflected a pass into Smith's hands to end the threat.

The NFL championship spectacle at East Rutherford, New Jersey, will be the first in Super Bowl history staged outdoors in a cold-climate city.

The weather forecast is for the coldest conditions in Super Bowl history with a chance of rain or snow showers and temperatures between 37 and 25 degrees Fahrenheit (3 to minus 4 Celsius).